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RESPONSIBILITY OF COMMUNITY COUNCILS
FOR LOCAL AGRICULTURAL ENTERPRISES

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The most significant aspects of the functions of the community and municipal councils are outlined in the Statute for OeLB (Oertliche landwirtschaftliche Betriebe, local agricultural enterprises) of 20 May 1954.

Although the OeLBs are organizations established by the community or municipal councils, they are not directly subordinate to these state organs. The operations of the OeLBs are organized according to the principle of personal responsibility. Such responsibility makes it imperative that the director and leading officials of an OeLB have independent authority to take measures necessary for the operations of the OeLB. No one may interfere with the execution of operational measures so long as the director of an OeLB handles the problems confronting him with the required prudence. However, if the director of an OeLB endangers the fulfillment of the economic plan, either by intent or by negligence, then the local administrative organs must take direct action with regard to the OeLB's operations.

Since the OeLBs are organizations established by the community or municipal councils, the local administrative organs must exercise direct supervision over them. The local administrative organs fulfill their supervisory duties by being fully informed concerning the business affairs of the OeLBs and by guiding and assisting in the work of the managements of the OeLBs and of the trade unions. While local administrative organs furnish guidance to the OeLBs only when they find shortcomings and weaknesses in the latter's operations, the types of assistance cover a much wider field, as illustrated below:

1. The manager of an OeLB must submit a business report to the community representatives concerning the development of the OeLB and concerning difficulties which may arise in its operations. The community councils should investigate the underlying causes for such difficulties and take remedial action.
2. The local administrative organs have the special duty of establishing a friendly relationship between the OeLB, on the one hand, and the cooperative farmers or individual farmers, on the other hand. The establishment of friendly relations between these elements is of decisive importance for the development and strengthening of the cooperative sector of agriculture.
3. The OeLBs are to strengthen the cooperative sector of agriculture by joining existing agricultural producer cooperatives. This step is very important, since it will be the basis for the economic and social measures to be instituted. The local administrative organs must therefore examine whether the OeLBs adhere to the instructions and directives issued by the government concerning the rights and duties of the workers (wage and salary agreements, introduction of the system of performance wages, enforcement of enterprise regulations, etc.). These measures greatly facilitate the incorporation of the OeLB enterprises into the cooperative sector of agriculture in the near future.

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